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NEWSLETTER

101-1235

23 November 1989

Washington

DC

LECH WALESA...."Respect for human dignity, liberty and freedom are still noble things for which to aspire, and even die for."

Those were the words of Lech Walesa as he stood before a Joint Session of the U.S. House and Senate on November 15th. Mr Walesa was but the second private citizen of a foreign nation to ever stand before the U.S. Congress and address its legislators. That day was history made before our eyes.

This humble electrician from Gdansk, Poland, in his opening remarks to the Joint Session of Congress said "This is for me an honor so great, a moment so solemn, that I can find nothing to compare it with."

His name is legend in Poland and there are few Americans who are not familiar with the deeds of this great man. He told us with great pride of his work in the shipyards of Gdansk and the early days when he founded the **Solidarity** movement--for freedom and government by the people.

His success with the Solidarity union in Poland is known throughout the world. He is--in so many ways--the light and the energy for what has been happening throughout Eastern Europe. His was the beacon that pointed the way. And all through this, his humility and compassion have endeared him to free men and women everywhere in the world.

Toward the end of Mr Walesa's speech to Congress, his words touched us deeply when he said "From this podium I'm expressing words of gratitude to the American people. It is they who supported us in the difficult days of martial law and persecution. It is they who sent us aid, who protested against violence. Today, when I am able to freely address the whole world from this elevated spot, I would like to thank them with special warmth."

In the morning of November 15th, we had a working session with Mr Walesa and I had an opportunity to discuss the problems of agriculture and how we might cooperate. And in the evening, the leaders of Congress

(more)

played host to Mr Walesa at a special dinner given in his honor. It was a privilege for Lucille and I to visit briefly with Mr Walesa.

There is only one way to describe the feeling I had while listening to Lech Walesa. It was as if I were listening to one of our own American Revolutionary heroes from 200 years ago--as if time had doubled back on itself and the words of freedom spoken by our own people more than 200 years ago were alive in the heart of this humble electrician from Poland. From his mouth came history that is sacred to every American citizen. And now it will be legend in Poland.

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THANKSGIVING. This is the harvest time of year, a time to acknowledge what we have reaped in our work and what we have accomplished through our wisdom and our resourcefulness.

Thanksgiving is a welcomed haven from the liabilities of living; it is a time when we can count the assets and ignore the costs. For all of us who work and struggle through this tumultuous world, Thanksgiving Day is a moment of peace and an opportunity to appreciate everything that is good about our lives.

We eat and give thanks to those who raise our food and to the Lord who makes it possible. We give thanks for the health that we have, for the homes and families we have built, and we pray for the future that will come to each of us through our strength and resolve.

And most importantly, we gather this day with our loved ones and cherish the closeness and the goodness that we make in our lives. The de la Garza family joins in unison to wish each South Texan a Thanksgiving Day filled with happiness and joy.

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VISITORS FROM HOME. Mayor Gilbert Galvan of San Benito; Richard M. Hinojosa of Edinburg; Noralisa Leo of La Joya.

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